

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : Mr. DeLoach

DATE: April 1, 1960

FROM : M. A. Jones

SUBJECT: "THE BEST MAN"  
LEGITIMATE PLAY  
NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

Tolson  
John  
Parsons  
Elmont  
Allard  
DeLoach  
Stone  
McGuire  
Olsen  
Tamm  
Trotter  
W.C. Sullivan  
Tele. Room  
Ingram  
Gandy


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b7C

ASAC Alton M. Bryant telephonically contacted the Bureau Headquarters this afternoon and advised Wick that in a review by Louis Sobel which appeared in the "New York Journal American" concerned comments about the season's newest play, "The Best Man," by Gore Vidal. Sobel's column states, "But there was one jarring note to this reporter--and that was an unnecessary, quite unfunny and certainly unfair jibe at J. Edgar Hoover. Some among the audience expressed their displeasure in loud "boos!" Bryant advised no Agents were in attendance at this play. A Special Agent will attend this performance tonight and the New York Office will advise the results of this review tomorrow.

Bufiles reflect Gore Vidal was mentioned in the January 20, 1948, issue of the "Daily Worker" in a review of his book, "The City and The Pillar." This book dealt with the physical adventures of a male homosexual. Vidal was also associated with two individuals who were the subject of security-type investigations in 1954 and 1956.

RECOMMENDATION:

None. For information.  
Addendum: REW: 4-2-60: Supervisor Tom Ring of the New York Office saw this play 4-1-60. The only reference to the Director is when one play character (presumably Vice President Nixon) says to another (presumably Harry Truman) "J. Edgar Hoover considers you to be one of the most moral and religious men ever to be in the White House." The man addressed replies with a sarcastic inflection: "I'll

1 - Mr. DeLoach

reserve my opinion of J. Edgar Hoover for a posthumous memoir." This is apparently where the audience booed, 3-31-60. Agent Ring says the crack came out fast and fell very flat in the 4-1-60 performance. He says several people filed out in the middle of the second act. Ring was told to take no action.

REC-26

EX-105

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MAR 1 1962

CRIME REC.

## MELVYN DOUGLAS DISCUSSES ROLE

Says Implications of His Part  
in 'The Best Man' Go Far  
Beyond Political Scene

By LOUIS CALTA

Melvyn Douglas is playing his second political role on Broadway during one theatrical term. But this time he appears to have drawn a winning ticket.

In Gore Vidal's "The Best Man," which opened Thursday night and which has won all of the critics' votes, he depicts a former Secretary of State competing for the Presidential nomination against an opportunistic and conniving opponent. Earlier this season he was seen in "The Gang's All Here" as an easy-going, good-natured President who strongly resembled Warren Gamaliel Harding.

Did his interests and experiences in politics have anything to do with his apparent affinity for political dramas? "Well," Mr. Douglas said yesterday, "I've always had a dinner-table interest in politics. This, though, was totally unpremeditated. I had no intention of doing another play this season, but this so engaged me that I couldn't resist it."

Mr. Douglas, who was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention when President Franklin D. Roosevelt ran for a third term, was asked if there was anything in his portrayal that derived from his personal involvement in politics.

### Roles Are Composites

"I don't necessarily associate this part," he said, "with any specific, living candidate or political figure. Not only my role, but all of the others are composites that closely resemble one another."

The author, Mr. Douglas explained, has tried to portray three archetypes in political life today. Each has elements that can be found in both parties, he said. In his opinion, the implications of the play "go way beyond politics." They represent "the actions of people and the kind of things they do in our present society under stress."

Had his wife, Helen Gallagher, actress and former Democratic Representative from California, given him any advice or tips for his interpretation?

"Quite the contrary," Mr. Douglas replied with a chuckle. "She completely stayed out of it because of her involvement. She has tended to lean backwards not to bring in any point of view that might be prejudicial." Mrs. Douglas' comment to this: "I have been very busy."

### Work Stirred Discussion

Since this was an election year, had there been any especial public reaction to the play on its pre-New York travels? Mr. Douglas said that the work had stirred animated discussions between the acts during all of its out-of-town performances and that quite a number of political figures, including Thomas K. Finletter, former Secretary of the Air Force, and Gov. Luis Muñoz Marín of Puerto Rico, had visited backstage to express their favorable reactions.

Some minor complaints, Mr. Douglas said, came from "two or three lesser political people" who felt disappointed when the liberal Presidential candidate did not strike back hard enough at his political antagonists.

He also recalled that some sections of the play had elicited equal portions of boos and applause from Boston audiences. The partisan reactions were usually provoked by the line of advice given to the expedient Presidential candidate, portrayed by Frank Lovejoy, that he "pull a Nixon, go on television and cry on the nation's shoulders with two cocker spaniels."

"These are things about which people feel pretty deeply," Mr. Douglas noted with seriousness. "At all events, Mr. Douglas appears to be assured of a long tenure of office. 'The Best Man' is the town's latest dramatic hit."

Tolson	_____
Mohr	_____
Parsons	_____
Belmont	_____
Callahan	_____
DeLoach	_____
Malone	_____
McGuire	_____
Rosen	_____
Tamm	_____
Trotter	_____
W.C. Sullivan	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Ingram	_____
Gandy	_____

The Washington Post and	_____
Times Herald	_____
The Washington Daily News	_____
The Evening Star	_____
New York Herald Tribune	_____
New York Journal-American	_____
New York Mirror	_____
New York Daily News	_____
New York Post	_____
The New York Times	17
The Worker	_____
The New Leader	_____
The Wall Street Journal	_____
Date	_____

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62-0-59119

APR 2 1960

ENCLOSURE

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

## *Memorandum*

TO :Mr. DeLoach *Dew*  
FROM :M. A. Jones

DATE: 7-28-61

SUBJECT: ARTICLE ENTITLED "COMMENT"  
BY GORE VIDAL IN  
AUGUST, 1961, ISSUE OF  
ESQUIRE MAGAZINE

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The August, 1961, issue of captioned magazine carried an article on page 120 entitled "Comment" by Gore Vidal which generally points out that President Kennedy and various other people have been telling citizens of the United States what to do to improve our society. Vidal seeks to add his advice in this matter and states that he feels there are many problems to solve in our own society, ranging from the abolition of capital punishment to school integration. He then makes the statement that the citizen can be useful in social and moral legislation where much work is needed, and he must be vigilant regarding civil liberties or he might one day find himself living, if not in a police state, at least in a police city.

Vidal then related an incident which he had reportedly witnessed in Washington, D. C., in the Spring of 1961, wherein he alleged he saw four policemen beat up two unresisting persons on a public street for absolutely no cause. He stated he had called a local newspaper to report the incident; however, nothing has happened since.

Vidal then related that when he got back to New York, he read an editorial of a southern editor attacking the John Birch Society. The editor allegedly quoted the FBI as saying that the "Birchers were 'irresponsible.'" Vidal then related that some hours before the editorial was published, two FBI Agents visited him and inquired as to his authority on the "irresponsible" quotation. It turned out that the editor's sources were unreliable; however, when the editor inquired how the FBI knew of his editorial in advance, he got no answer.

## **INFORMATION IN BUREAU FILES**

The "editorial" referred to by Vidal is possibly an article which appeared in the 3-19-61 issue of "The Nashville Tennessean," which stated in part, "An FBI spokesman in Washington said last week the FBI... would characterize the society (John Birch Society) as 'irresponsible but not subversive.'" Numerous inquiries were received by the Bureau regarding this article, which were answered by informing them of the fact that no FBI official in Washington had publicly characterized

- Summary -

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ENCLOSURE

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CRIME RESEARCH

Jones to DeLoach Memo  
RE: Article "Comment"  
By Gore Vidal

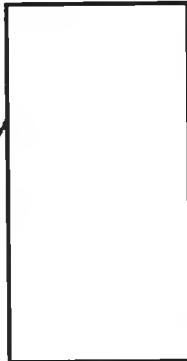
the John Birch Society. No information could be located in Bufiles regarding the alleged contact with the editor as related by Vidal in his article.

Bufiles reflect that Vidal was mentioned in the 1-20-48 issue of the "Daily Worker" in a review of his book, "The City and The Pillar." The book dealt with the physical adventures of a male homosexual. Vidal was an associate of two individuals who were the subjects of security-type investigations conducted in 1954 and 1956. He was also the author of a play entitled "The Best Man" which opened in New York City on 3-31-60. The play was a political-type drama which contained one small reference to the Director to the effect that one play character (presumably Vice President Nixon) said to another (presumably Harry Truman), "J. Edgar Hoover considers you to be one of the most moral and religious men ever to be in the White House." The reply was, "I'll reserve my opinion of J. Edgar Hoover for a posthumous memoir." An Agent who monitored the play stated the exchange came out fast and fell very flat. No action was taken regarding this matter. (62-0-59489)

Files reflect that we have enjoyed limited cordial relations with Esquire, Inc., since 1947. (94-3-4-350)

RECOMMENDATION:

For information.



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## COMMENT GORE VIDAL

*The race into Grace, or  
the Civilization Gap*

FOR sometime now our leaders, both demagogic and honest, have been telling us to rouse ourselves to greater purpose, national and private. Walter Lippmann suggests that the United States behaves like a society which thinks it is complete with no more to accomplish; that, for better or worse, we are what we are and the only danger to our comfort is external. President Kennedy's exhortations to self-sacrifice are becoming ever more urgent, even shrill. His critics point out that he has not done much to show us how we might best serve our society. To which the answer of the Administration, at least privately, is that until Americans begin to understand those things which threaten us, both from without and within, any Presidential program demanding the slightest sacrifice would be demolished by Congress and the jingo press. After all, things do look all right if you don't look too carefully and no one can accuse us of ever looking carefully at an unpleasant sight, whether it is Soviet superiority in space or chronic unemployment at home. Now I don't want to add my voice to the general keening. American society has many virtues which we should never underestimate. By fits and starts we are attaining a civilization and, barring military accident, we shall certainly attain one before the Soviets. "Be the First into Civilization!" There's a slogan for the two competitors.

Yet for those who are puzzled at how to respond to Presidential cries for action, vigor and moving-aheadness, I propose that there are certain very practical things that we can do in a society which is by no means complete. (Those professional patriots who trumpet that this is the new Eden and only traitors would change it or downgrade it are declaring of course that the society is closed and therefore decadent and soon to fail. I vote no to "perfection" and yes to change and survival.) Most of us spend too much time solving international problems at cocktail parties, rather than dealing with those things which we might affect and change, the tying up of the loose ends in our own society. There are many of them, ranging from the abolition of capital punishment to school integration. On either of those great matters any citizen can be usefully engaged. He can also be useful in social and moral legislation where there is much work to be done. As for civil liberties, any one who is not vigilant may one day find himself living, if not in a police state, at least in a police city. Now I will tell a horror story which has haunted me for several months, something which, I am told, is common but which I witnessed for the first time, reacting as deeply as (though acting differently to) the writer in Angus Wilson's novel *Hemlock and After*.

ESQUIRE MAGAZINE  
August, 1961

ENCLOSURE

62-107665-X1  
913-4350-55

I was in Washington for a few days last spring. At about ten o'clock in the evening of my last day in town, I took a taxicab to the Union Station. It was a mild drizzly night. Traffic in the side streets near Pennsylvania Avenue was tied up. My cab was stopped in front of the YMCA, a large building a half-block from the Old State Department and two blocks from the White House. The sidewalk was deserted. As we sat there, out of the building marched four men, wearing light raincaps with upturned brims and trench coats. There were two men with them. One was well-dressed, perhaps sixty; he wore a white raincoat. The other was young and thin and shabby and he wore no raincoat. I watched as this odd company moved seven or eight yards along the sidewalk toward the traffic light, which was now red. In front of a deserted shop, the light-caps stopped and methodically began to beat up the two men with them. I sat there stunned. There had been no provocation. As suddenly and pointlessly as a nightmare the attack began and there, right in front of me on the black, wet sidewalk, the older man lay as two men kicked him, while the other two shoved the young man into the doorway of the shop and began to beat him across the face.

The cab driver, an old Negro, said, "I hate to see anybody do that to another man. I do." The light was now green but I told him to

wait. I got out and crossed to the nearest light-cap. He was, at the moment, disengaged. He had been working the younger man over and he now stood a few feet away, breathing hard. I asked him who he was and what he was doing. He turned on me and I have never seen such a savage, frightening little face. He was plump, flushed, with popping eyes; a young pig gone berserk. He began to scream at me to get out of there or I'd be arrested. Threats and obscenities poured over me in one long orgiastic breath. I looked away and saw that the older man was now on his stomach, trying to shield his head from the kicks of the men standing over him. I noticed his raincoat was streaked with mud. The younger man was silent except for the whacking noise his face made as it was struck — first left then right, like a punching bag. In my hardest voice I said: "You're going to be the one in trouble, if you don't tell me who you are." The dark one stepped in and showed me his detective's badge. He told me to get lost and he returned to his athletics. The plump one was now longing (and I do not exaggerate by using a verb of judgment) to get back to the man in the doorway. But before he could, I stopped him and asked him his name. He started to curse again but a look from his companion stopped him. He gave me his

name and then with a squeal leaped on the man in the doorway and began hitting him, making, as he did, gasping noises, not human to my ear.

I stood there dumbly wondering what to do. Right in front of me, two men were being knocked about by four men who were, quite simply, enjoying their work. I was also witness to the fact that the victims had not resisted arrest, which would of course be the police explanation. At Union Station I called The Washington Post Times-Herald and talked to the night editor. He knew who I was. Yes, the story interested him. He told me the Post had recently run a story which had led to some arrests. The men in the light-caps had been doing their duty. He asked me what I intended to do about it. I shouted into the receiver, "This is your town. Your scandal. Your newspaper. You do something about it, I'm catching a train." He asked if they could use my name. I said of course and hung up.

And that was the end of it. I have often thought of those two since, wondered who they were and what happened to them. I also brooded on the curious horror of seeing our society at its most vicious two blocks from the White House. It is true, as Sartre once

wrote, referring to French Army atrocities in Algeria, that the real tragedy in our time is that any of us can be, interchangeably, victim or torturer.

I got back to New York to read that a southern editor had written an editorial attacking the John Birch Society. In the course of his editorial, he quoted the F.B.I. as saying that the Birchers were "irresponsible." Some hours before the editorial was published, two men from the F.B.I.

arrived at the editor's office and asked on what authority he could quote the F.B.I. as terming the Birch Society "irresponsible." The editor's sources were not, as it turned out, reliable. But he, quite naturally, wanted to know how the F.B.I. knew the contents of his editorial before it was published. He got no answer.

Now the point to these two stories is that here is something we *can* do: the guarding of our own liberties.

We may not be able to save Laos, but we can, as individuals, keep an eye on the police forces in the country even if it means, as some have proposed, setting up permanent committees of appeal in every city to hear cases of police brutality, or of any other infraction of our freedom to speak and to pursue what our founders called happiness; two rights perennially endangered not only at the local but at the federal level. #

ESQUIRE MAGAZINE  
August, 1961

REC-29

107665

February 7, 1962

Mrs. Mario Nunez de la Vega  
518 Perugia Avenue  
Coral Gables, Florida

Dear Mrs. Nunez:

Your letter postmarked February 1st, with enclosure, has been received, and I appreciate the interest prompting you to write.

The FBI is strictly an investigative agency of the Federal Government and, as such, does not make evaluations nor draw conclusions as to the character or integrity of any organization, publication or individual. In view of this policy, I can assure you that no representative of this Bureau has publicly characterized the organization mentioned in your communication.

In response to your request, I am returning the article you sent with your communication.

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

John Edgar Hoover  
Director

Enclosure

NOTE: The Bureau is aware of the article entitled "Comment" by Gore Vidal which appeared in the August, 1961, issue of "Esquire" magazine. Numerous inquiries were received regarding this article and were answered generally as above. No information was located in Bureau files concerning the alleged contact with the editor of a newspaper by FBI Agents to induce him to change the statement in his editorial that the FBI has said

Tolson \_\_\_\_\_  
Belmont \_\_\_\_\_  
Mohr \_\_\_\_\_  
Callahan \_\_\_\_\_  
Conrad \_\_\_\_\_  
DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_  
Evans \_\_\_\_\_  
Malone \_\_\_\_\_  
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REC'D--READING ROOM  
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NOTE: continued

the "Birchers were irresponsible." Vidal was mentioned in the 1-20-48 issue of the "Daily Worker" in a review of his book, "The City and the Pillar" dealing with the physical adventures of a male homosexual. Vidal was also associated with two individuals who were subjects of security-type investigations by the Bureau in 1954 and 1956. In April, 1960, his play, "The Best Man," opened on Broadway and contained an unnecessary and unfair remark about the Director which the audience booed. The Bureau has not investigated Vidal. Correspondent cannot be identified in Bufiles.

Mr. Tolson  
Mr. Belmont  
Mr. Mohr  
Mr. Callahan  
Mr. Conrad  
Mr. DeLoach  
Mr. Evans  
Mr. Malone  
Mr. Rosen  
Mr. Sullivan  
Mr. Tavel  
Mr. Trotter  
Tele. Room  
Mr. Ingram  
Miss Gandy

W.C.  
✓  
MOPA

518 Perugia Avenue  
Coral Gables, Fla.

The F.B.I.  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sirs;

Enclosed is an article in an old (Aug.) "ESQUIRE" magazine that I and several friends of mine have only just read. I think that ESQUIRE enjoys a good reputation and therefore we were astounded at what Gore Vidal (I think Mrs. J. Kennedy's step-brother) has to say about the F.B.I. You will find this toward the end of the article; the first example about the detectives of the Washington police force I suppose is no business of yours....but the F.B.I. protecting the John Birch Society? Is this true? Why would, almost, a member of the first family desire to attack the F.B.I. if it is not true? I await your reply anxiously as do the others I have shown the article to, in the hopes that it may not be true. Also I certainly would appreciate it if you would return the clipping. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Mario Nuñez de la Vega

FEB 5 1962

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J. M. N.

MCI-16

EX 101

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CORR

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI

DATE: 1/5/62

FROM : SAC, PHILADELPHIA (100-0)

SUBJECT: GORE VIDAL  
INFORMATION CONCERNING (SECURITY)

Enclosed herewith, one copy each for Bureau and New York, is photostat of a copy of a letter to the President dated 12/28/61 from FRED DEVINE, 26 North Llanwellyn Avenue, Glenolden, Pa., with accompanying transcript of a radio interview of VIDAL by FRANK FORD.

For information of New York, the Frank Ford Show is a controversial Philadelphia radio interview show and DEVINE is a citizen who regularly tapes what he considers propaganda interviews and forwards transcripts to various public officials. The Bureau has been given prior information on the Ford Show and on DEVINE.

No action being taken by Philadelphia.

(2) - Bureau (Encl. 2) (RM)  
 2 - New York (Encl. 2) (RM)  
 2 - Philadelphia  
 1 - 100-0  
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CONT'D

ENCLOSURE ATTACHED

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EX  
 -50 JAN 15 1962  
 MAR 1 1962

ENCLOSURE TO	BUREAU	FROM PHILADELPHIA
GORE VIDAL; INFORMATION CONCERNING (SECURITY)		
Re:		
Contents:	1-Photostat letter to President from FRED DEVINE, 12/28/61	
	1-Photostat transcript radio interview of VIDAL by FRANK FORD	
Bufile #		
PH file #	100-0	
PH letter	dated 1/5/62	

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62-107665-2  
1/50-34969  
ENCLOSURE

26 N. Llanwellyn Avenue  
Glenolden, Pennsylvania  
December 28, 1961

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President,

It was a perfectly splendid smear. Mr. Ford's guest was the noted playwright, one Gore Vidal.

It started innocently enough. The gentlemen were going to discuss Mr. Vidal's latest play. However the discussion of the play never really got off the ground. Some five minutes at the end of the interview seemed to be all that could be devoted to the play. The gentlemen became so wrapped up in the "extremists to the right."

Yes, it started innocently enough. Some comment was made with respect to the fact that Mr. Vidal was a recent candidate for a seat in the Congress. If Mr. Vidal would have been successful in his bid it is a foregone conclusion that one of the fifty house members needed to abolish the House Un-American Activities Committee would have been 'in the bag,' to the delight of Gus Hall and his boss in the Kremlin, one Nikita Khrushchev. Mr. Burton White, leader of the students who participated in the San Francisco Riots told us of the magic number of Congress needed to "swing it."

Mr. Ford swung into the smear with the 'man on horseback' routine. And then Mr. Ford set it up by calling up the words uttered by you and the Vice President, in Los Angeles and Philadelphia, respectively. Mr. Vidal stated that he is nervous. Then he 'banged' Senator Goldwater and stated that you were a conservative! Next to receive the blast was the house Committee and then to the John Birch Society, thence to McCarthy, Rockwell and so on.

A most interesting fact was pinned down when it was flatly stated and admitted that Frank Donner was a communist. Mr. Donner is the gentleman who has just written a book blasting the Committee. And then after calling up the KKK, another slap at Goldwater and an uppercut to the Birch Society the interview, a most interesting interview, ended.

Most conspicuous by its absence was any slap at the extremists to the left, briefly mentioned at the outset and promptly forgotten. Not one word about Nikita and the lineage of conspirators who started the whole thing, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. I wonder why?

Respectfully yours,

Fred Devine

cc: Yes

FRANK FORD AND GORE VIDAL - DECEMBER 28, 1961

Ford - I mentioned about good will and politics and so forth, you recently had a fling at politics, before we talk about the play, Romulus, you recently had a fling in politics, didn't you?

Vidal - Well, yes, I'm here as a discredited politician from upstate New York. I ran for Congressman in the last election,

Ford - Not discredited, but defeated.

Vidal - If not discredited, I made the race.

Ford - What makes a fellow, a busy and successful playwright want to be a Congressman?

Vidal - Well, I've always been in politics or interested in it and my family, it's a family of politicians and I have a theory now that perhaps politics is a little too serious for me to be a politician, as I have been and especially in my neck of the woods which has been Republican since 1910 and not that I have anything to say against being a Republican but the idea is that perhaps a change is necessary. We have five counties up there and one of them has never been Democratic since once and that was to vote against Abraham Lincoln. Franklin Roosevelt lived in my county, Dutchess and he never carried and I said well, I can carry it I didn't.

Ford - Not enough theater goers up there, that's all. They weren't .....

Vidal - I think it was a worthwhile thing to do and I think that you should get people into politics who have obviously nothing much to gain out of it and by getting people interested in politics, while they're in there for the money, they're in there to make their law practice a little bit better, that's always a motive there is also a group for reasons entirely of vanity and that's perhaps a reason more dangerous than those who are out for a future buck but I do think there is a whole movement in the country now and I think Kennedy is representative of it of people going in because they think it is a worthwhile career, that it need not be as depressing or as compromising as we have been led to believe.

Ford - I'll talk about Romulus but I'm very curious about the politics situation. You had mentioned about you think it's important for people other than professional politicians to be in politics. It's true that I saw, by the way, a television play about your family, Senator Gore is an ancestor, isn't he?

Vidal - My grandfather.

Ford - Grandfather, yes, and I saw a marvelous play on TV.  
I think you wrote that play.

Vidal - I wrote it and I acted in it.

Ford - That's right, that's right, and .....

Vidal - It's the first and last time as an actor.

Ford - You did very well in it, why was it the last time as  
an actor?

Vidal - Well, you know, they said they'd do it on tape so  
I said well, you know, I played a narrator and I acted in  
various scenes. I said well, you know, if I make any mis-  
takes, I can go back and I can fix it. At last they said,  
we're going to do this live. Well, I discovered not only  
that I cannot act but that I cannot remember lines and at  
the dress rehearsal the teleprompter broke down ...

Ford - Oh, fine.

Vidal - .. and there's a very nice photograph I have showing  
me two minutes before going on the air with 14 million people  
watching and the blankest face you've ever seen. I'm just  
staring off into the middle distance.

Ford - They were your lines. How come you couldn't remember  
them. You wrote them.

Vidal - When your mind goes blank, it goes blank.

Ford - Even with your own lines?

Vidal - Especially with your own.

Ford - Well, now, you mentioned Mr. Kennedy. Now they say  
about politics, I have a news period coming up and I'll be  
right back.....I'll tell you about Romulus right after the  
news....right before the news you were talking a little bit  
about politics. Gore, you mentioned Mr. Kennedy and mentioned  
politics and the fact that there's a new feeling, let's say  
in politics in this country as evidenced by a young adminis-  
tration. I've been reading about Mr. Kennedy's postponement  
about sending that rather controversial bill that any housing  
would have to be absolutely without any restriction of any  
kind in order to qualify for government funds. Now this bill  
has been sitting on Mr. Kennedy's desk for some time. Accor-  
ding to all those in the know, the political hip people say,  
Well, if he signs that bill and he's in favor of Congress,  
with a recent session of Congress, he'll have a lot of trouble  
from a lot of these Southerners because of this highly  
controversial bill and he wants to push through certain things  
but they won't do it. In other words, what I'm saying is  
compromise. It's part of politics. And how could a fellow

like you who has certain beliefs, how can you compromise all the time? Politics is a great game of compromise.

Vidal - Well, all life is compromise. As far as I know the only complete absolutists who in our time, who lived out his own legend was of course, Hitler, who was completely, totally sincere and acted out all of his own madnesses with total consistency. I am not in favor of absolutism at any level, whether it's moral or intellectual or political and I should think that the art of our form of government, which is not much admired by the majority of our people. I have a great fear that the people in this country are tending much more toward men on horseback, much more toward easy answers to difficult problems, that any fact that any two people ~~can~~ who disagree can sit down and talk means that each is making a compromise, one would assume, with some great basic principle that he would stake his life upon. The whole point to our form of society is that two opposing views manage to work out something which you can live. Now you have a problem with a President like Kennedy who has certain and I should say passive and he's got a Congress that he's got to live with and he's got to get legislation through point by point. Well, in a time like this there is very little that a President can accomplish beyond two or three things on which he will put his neck absolutely on the block and he will say, now I'm going to have this and I'm going to fight but he's got the common market that he's got to fight. He's got the tariff situation which is going to be a blood bath for the next two years. He's got civil rights. He's going to have to make up his mind and I think you see him now, he's maneuvering, he's trying to shore up his own influence, he has not got much control over Congress. He has to build up his own personal popularity so that when he goes out, when he does take the field. People are getting impatient but remember he didn't come in a smiling golf playing general with a ready made reputation. He has now to make it on his own but I think you're going to see quite a lively administration when he does commit himself. He will get done those basic things which I think he feels should be done.

Ford - There was, I think, in what you just said some slight reference to opposing groups and so forth. We have seen, you mentioned the man on horseback and looking for easy, pat solutions to our problems. We have seen in recent months what might be called a fantastic resurgence of this ideal of the man on horseback. I can think of one, Mr. Welch, head of the John Birch Society as a classic example of a man who has all the easy answers to everything. Pull out of the UN, drop the bomb, etc., etc., and give my way and everything is going to be fine. How do you feel about the extremists whether to the extreme left or the extreme right that the President referred to recently and Mr. Johnson here in Philadelphia, the Vice President recently made references to. What's your own opinion about these extremists with the easy answers.

Vidal - Well, I'm nervous. I mean everyone is nervous, I

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX think what's going on in Texas, and Arizona, I get a lot of mail on this, I did a piece about Barry Goldwater in Life Magazine which has earned me a great deal of peculiar mail. I also did a column in Esquire and I've written quite a bit about the Birch Society and the House Un-American Activities Committee. I think that these people are trying to form, for the first time as an organization. Before they were always just busy. You know they would sound alright on the tariff and then suddenly they were all seeing flying saucers. You know, they're always afraid, there's always one pliantly lunatic note that they...

Ford - Fluoridation or water or some such thing.

Jidal - .... there voices tremble at this putting fluoride in the water but I have a hunch there's a great deal of money behind them. It's coming from Texas, a great deal of it, and from the oil men down there and they're putting, they're spending an enormous amount of money for what they call a conservative revival. Well, there's no such thing. Conservatism is a perfectly legitimate position, it happens to be a conservative country. In fact our President is a conservative President, by any reasonable terminology. This is a fascist revival and what they are after is the communists of which there are twenty two thousand in the United States, according to J. Edgar Hoover and I hope he knows everyone and is keeping an eye on them. What they're after, minority groups, they're after labor unions, they're after the twentieth century and they're up to no good and I think, I would be fascinated to see Goldwater nominated, by the Republican party, not because I wish my Republican friends any ill luck, although they woul<sup>d</sup> have it but I would be fascinated to see all these people come out from under the flat rock and get them out there in the open because this sort of thing, if you allow it, and you get frightened of it. The mail I get from around the country is fascinating. The reign of terror that they have with school boards, I seen one teacher in a high school in Wichita happened to say in science class, he said in his class that the Russians happen to be ahead of us in the means of delivering missiles. He was up before the school board and was forced to resign because he was obviously a communist. The man was, there was nothing against him of any kind except that and I think the teachers in the country and I've said this all over my district and I keep on saying it, the teachers in this country are terribly cowardly. They live in terror of their school boards and instead of standing up and being leaders in their communities they just sit back and allow themselves to be pushed around. I think it's very sad.

Ford - Now, you mentioned the House Un-American Activities Committee, I have just finished about two-thirds of a book, The Un-Americans, which is a detailed document of the activities of the House Un-American Activities Committee. I have for the past five years and some months that I've been doing this program, spoken out very forthrightly against the House Un-American Activities Committee in no uncertain terms. against

such things as the John Birch Society, against the remnants of the McCarthyites and their followers, against the George Lincoln Rockwells who are relatively unimportant and really unimportant and I get the same kind of mail from peculiar people too, such things as this happened to me. Have you been reported yet to the FBI.

Vidal - Probably.

Ford - Well, I know I have because I know, I get carbon copies of letters that they send to the FBI and I wonder to myself are these people, do they seriously think that I'm subversive. Do they think that I'm a, I'd like to show them my income tax return some time how I love our form of government, you know, but they think (here with great emotion - Fred Devine) the minute you're a dissenter, the minute, the I, I, for the for the, better than four years doing the program, almost five years that Mr. Eisenhower was President, I described him as a very nice well meaning man who was a do nothing President, full of good will but in effect ineffectual and boy you would think I was attacking everybody's father and mother they way, the kind of mail I get on account of that. They say, "You shouldn't talk that way." I say well, why shouldn't i, i have free speech, I'm you know, the station's says, you know, say what you want as long as it is in good taste. Well they think it's dangerous to be up opposed to something.

Vidal - They find the Bill of Rights limiting but there's a fascinating poll taken in a high school, I think it's a thing called ? , at Purdue and they do it every year and they ask the kids questions and the answers to the questions if properly interpreted were really Bill of Rights questions and they find out that on about seventy per cent of the Bill of Rights, the kids were against it. They didn't believe in freedom of speech for everybody, they didn't believe that you should be free to say what you wanted to, they were all for police censorship and they admired the FBI tremendously. Well, all this are signs of the times. I happen to belong to the old America where you have the idea of dissent was a proper thing and if you didn't discuss things openly, you're society got into serious trouble.

Ford - We just got a note here. We have a telephone which they answer sometimes in the cloak room and a caller just called to say that the book that I mentioned, the Un-American, was written by a communist.

Vidal - Well, you have some of our friends listening to you tonight ...

Ford - Oh, well they ...

Vidal - Well, this is very interesting thing. I'll say one thing for the right wing in America, I'm going to get the

post office absolutely in the black, they write and write and write, (laughs). Yes, you out there in the dark, Frank Donner, author of the Un-American was indeed, was, not is, a communist. I happened to review his book in the Herald Tribune, taking John Crosby's place for one column and it's a book about the House Un-American Activities Committee, published by Ballantine and it's called the Un-Americans. Well, it's a first rate documented case, it's a little shrill but it is, the man is a constitutional lawyer and he has given a case against the committee. Now this is an interesting thing. The committee did not answer him any of the charges Donner made against them and they were pretty deadly on the committee's interest and the favor of racist groups, Ku Klux Klan, said that they were ident, you know, they havet the same goals as the House Un-American Activities Committee. But the entire reaction was, don't answer the charge, just say that Mr. Donner was a communist. Well, I got a lot of this so I checked up on him one day, I met him, talked to him, found out about him, perhaps he is trying to pull down the republic, but in that case the FBI would arrest him but he was at one time a communist but they did not answer the charges so we might move on to another book by Telford Taylor and he is certainly not a communist, he was head of our legal end of the Nuremberg trials. He wrote a book called Grand Inquest which was a whole study of House investigating committees, their uses and their abuses and I think that gives the House committee just as bad a notice.

Ford - Well, you know you mentioned Barry Goldwater a little while ago. Mr. Goldwater has not endorsed the John Birch Society nor has he said anything against the John Birch Society. He's been completely mute on the question of the John Birch Society, neither for nor again. And it is interesting he hasn't denounced them or has he accepted them.

Vidal - Well, he hasn't been able to figure out how many members they've got yet. He's a politician.

Ford - When you said that you hoped that he ran in '64, I've already seen the opposition slogan on Goldwater, it said Goldwater in '64, 1864. Let's talk for a minute about the play Bonniville which opened last night. This is adapted and Phil... said your own interpretation of ...'s play. What first attracted you to the play .....

(at this point Mr. Vidal and Mr. Ford engaged in five minutes of rather pointless discussion of the play.)

Ford - .... our guest Mr. Gore Vidal, Good luck it's been a pleasure to have you.

Vidal - Thank you Frank, we're off to the John Birch Society meeting now..

Ford - He's off to the John Birch Society, well on your white horse.

701-0-34969

62-107665-2

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI

[Redacted] b6  
b7C DATE: 10-23-62

FROM : SAC, BOSTON

ATTEN: CRIME RECORDS

SUBJECT: DEBATE BETWEEN GORE VIDAL AND  
WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR.  
MODERATOR DAVID SUSSKIND

Mr. Nelson  
Mr. Belmont  
Mr. Mohr  
Mr. Geiger  
Mr. Callahan  
Mr. Conrad  
Mr. DeLoach  
Mr. Evans  
Mr. Gale  
Mr. Rosen  
Mr. Sullivan  
Mr. Tavel  
Mr. Trotter  
Tele. Room  
Miss Holmes  
Miss Gandy

b6  
b7C

On 10/21/62 a debate between [redacted] b6  
dividuals was telecast over WGBH (Channel 2), the educational b7C  
channel in the Boston area. This program was viewed by  
SA JOHN L. FAHERTY and he indicates that the comments between  
BUCKLEY and VIDAL were quite caustic and vitriolic. SA  
Faherty states that during one discussion concerning Civil  
Rights, VIDAL mentioned that the Director had indicated  
that there were about 22,000 known Communists in the Unit  
States. VIDAL added that if the Director did not have a  
complete dossier on these 22,000, "he is not doing his job".  
VIDAL then said that there must be at least 22,000 FBI ag

On another occasion while discussing Civil Rights  
BUCKLEY made the remark, "I wouldn't awaken an individual  
at 3 o'clock in the morning for an interview either."  
SA FAHERTY stated that the above were the only references  
made to the FBI.

The foregoing is furnished to the Bureau for  
its information.

EJP:maw  
(3)

REC-35

62-107665-3

30  
13 OCT 25 1962

b6  
b7C

cc 100-3-95

353

34 NOV 9 1962

SEARCHED INDEXED SERIALIZED FILED  
1962 NOV 15 PM 4:45 P.M.

EX-1  
34 OUT 25 1962  
34

UNRECORDED COMM-FBI

~~MAILED~~

JAN 7 1965

NAME CHECK

*Photo*

CC TO: State/Cust/less  
REQ. REC'D. 3/24/66.

AM: 100

ANS.  
BY: *Abso. 19765*

January 6, 1965

GORE VIDAL

Born: October 3, 1925  
Westport, New York

The FBI has conducted no independent investigation concerning the subject of your name check inquiry. However, files of this Bureau do disclose that Gore Vidal was mentioned in the January 20, 1948, issue of the "Daily Worker" in a review of his book, "The City And The Pillar." The book dealt with the physical adventures of a male homosexual. Vidal was an associate of two individuals who were the subjects of security-type investigations conducted by the FBI in 1954 and 1956.

(62-107665)

"The National Guardian" dated November 13, 1961, carried an article stating that Gore Vidal was to be among the speakers for a Wednesday evening December 6, 1961, meeting at Manhattan Center, New York City which was to be a rally to abolish the House Un-American Activities Committee.

(61-7582-A)

The July 17, 1961, issue of the "New York Herald Tribune" carried a column by Gore Vidal who was substituting for John Crosby who was on vacation. The column dealt with the House Un-American Activities Committee and was critical of this committee's activities.

62-10885-X1)

A confidential informant who has furnished reliable information in the past furnished on May 21 and May 22, 1961,

b7D

Located among this material was the name Gore Vidal, Edgewater, Barrytown, New York.

(97-4196-34-38)

The files of the FBI contain no further information pertinent to the subject of your name check inquiry.

Original & 1-USIA

Request Received-12/8/64

TDW:ded *Dej*

(4)

REG 20

62-107665-2-4

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI, and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency. This is in answer to your request for a check of FBI files.

58 JAN 13 1965

21 JAN 8 1965

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : Mr. Mohr

DATE: June 24, 1964

FROM : C. D. DeLoach

SUBJECT: CRITICAL PROGRAM - CIVIL RIGHTS

2B STATION WPIX-TV

NEW YORK CITY

*[Large handwritten signature]*  
Reinhardt \_\_\_\_\_  
Mohr \_\_\_\_\_  
Casper \_\_\_\_\_  
Callahan \_\_\_\_\_  
Conrad \_\_\_\_\_  
DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_  
Evans \_\_\_\_\_  
Gandy \_\_\_\_\_  
J. F. \_\_\_\_\_  
Sullivan \_\_\_\_\_  
Tavel \_\_\_\_\_  
Trotter \_\_\_\_\_ b6  
Tele. Room \_\_\_\_\_  
Holmes \_\_\_\_\_ b7C  
Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

Assistant Director Malone called at 10:20 a.m. today and advised that one of the Agents in the office had just handed him a memorandum concerning a program which appeared last night over the above-entitled station.

Mr. Malone explained that WPIX is an independent station in New York City and is not a member of one of the networks. He said that at 11:15 p.m. last night the Agent was looking at the station and a program appeared called "Hot Line."

This was a panel type show where the panelists take telephone calls from the public and answer their questions. On the program were David Susskind; Gore Vidal (who Mal one described as being on the pink side); Reverend William Coffin, chaplain at Yale University; and Dorothy Kilgallen.

The first half of the program was extremely critical of the Director and the FBI in the handling of civil rights cases and bombing cases in the South. One statement was made that the Director should retire as he did not desire to carry out the law of the land as far as civil rights cases are concerned. Susskind said the FBI had utterly failed in the bombing cases in the South. There were, of course, other items taken up on the program; however, at the conclusion Susskind said that this was the first of its kind and was sort of a test pilot. He urged that listeners write in if they would like to have a program of this type continued in the fall season of 1964. *62-1041-6*

*NOT RECORDED*

Malone said that due to the late hour ~~very few people~~ <sup>2:10 AM</sup> saw the program and the only comment he has had so far is from this one Agent who had accidentally tuned in on it. He said that nevertheless some of the New York employees were going to write to the station and say that the program stunk, was factually incorrect, and do not think the program should be continued next fall. He said, of course, they would not identify themselves with the Bureau.

RECOMMENDATION: For information.

1 - Mr. Rosen  
1 - Mr. Evans  
1 - Mr. Jones

ECK:amr (5)

*68 JUL 1 1964*

18 JUL 1964

*[Large handwritten signatures]*  
CRIME RESEARCH FILE

ORIGINAL

NOTE: Bufiles contain no record of correspondent. In her incoming, correspondent mentioned the TV program "Hot Line" which has David Susskind as moderator. The panelists on the show about which correspondent wrote were Dorothy Kilgallen, a gossip columnist, Reverend William Sloan Coffin of Yale University and Gore Vidal. Coffin is well known to the Bureau. He is a highly vocal integrationist and has been extremely critical of the Bureau in the past. He is the Chaplain at Yale University and has been the center of much criticism because of his outspoken support of the integration movement. Susskind is well known to the Bureau. Bufiles reflect Gore Vidal was mentioned in the 1-20-48 issue of the Daily Worker in a review of his book, "The City and the Pillar." The book dealt with the physical adventure of a male homosexual. He was an associate of two individuals who were the subjects of security-type investigations conducted in 1954 and 1956. He was the author of a play, "The Best Man" which opened on 3-31-60 and had, as part of its script, a reference to the Director. On 9-23-62, he was on David Susskind's program and made derogatory remarks concerning the Director and stated there are probably as many Agents as there are communists. She is being addressed as Mrs. because she mentions her son in incoming.

JUL 1, 1964

62-16765-7

Dear [redacted]

I have received your letter of June 23rd and want to thank you for your kind remarks concerning my efforts as Director of the FBI.

It was good of you to write regarding the television program, "Hot Line." With reference to the current problem in Mississippi, let me assure you that the FBI is conducting an intensive and thorough investigation to determine the whereabouts of the three missing civil rights workers. Any other events which have occurred which may constitute a violation within the jurisdiction of this Bureau likewise are receiving careful attention.

I am pleased to know of your son's interest in the FBI. It is most encouraging to have the support of young people and I appreciate your advising me of his feelings. My associates join me in expressing thanks for your generous comments.

Sincerely yours,  
J. Edgar Hoover



SEE NOTE NEXT PAGE.

RR:mik

(3)

Tolson \_\_\_\_\_  
Belmont \_\_\_\_\_  
Mohr \_\_\_\_\_  
Casper \_\_\_\_\_  
Callahan \_\_\_\_\_  
Conrad \_\_\_\_\_  
DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_  
Evans \_\_\_\_\_  
Gale \_\_\_\_\_  
Rosen \_\_\_\_\_  
Sullivan \_\_\_\_\_  
Tavel \_\_\_\_\_  
Trotter \_\_\_\_\_  
Tele. Room \_\_\_\_\_  
Holmes \_\_\_\_\_  
Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL ROOM  TELETYPE UNIT

JUL 1 2 38 PM '64

b6  
b7c

FBI REC'D-READING 1004

ORIGINAL FILED IN FBI DIRECTOR -

June 23 '64  
Midnight

J. Edgar Hoover

My dear Sir

Station WPIX, Ch 11, NY has just presented a program called "Hot Line". Susskind is the moderator. Listeners phone in questions & the panelists ~~ta~~ answering the calls. The panelists were Dorothy Kilgallen, Gare Vidal & Rev William Sloan Coffin of Yale Univ.

Mr. Tolson  
Mr. Belmont  
Mr. Mohr  
Mr. Casper  
Mr. Callahan  
Mr. Conrad  
Mr. Clegg  
Mr. Evans  
Mr. Gale  
Mr. Rosen  
Mr. Sullivan  
Mr. Tavel  
Mr. Trotter  
Tele. Room  
Miss Holmes  
Miss Gandy

I listened knowing full well how questions would be answered & I wasn't mistaken. I have just written to WPIX expressing my opinion of the program & of Mr. Vidal in particular. Of course a call came in (bona fide?) on the present crisis in Mississippi & that call was taken by Mr. Vidal. They all felt the FBI should "go in" & Vidal said that you were doing nothing, he couldn't understand why you had to go on & on being director that all you talked about was communism." I wish I could quote him word for word but since I can't I must just say that the words he used would leave the impression on listeners that you had outlived your usefulness that the big problem to-day is civil rights "& you haven't said a word."

I subscribe to National Review, The Tablet, Human Events, The Wanderer & the Golden Sphinx (N. C. I. C.) & the first three have been concerned attacks being made on our law enforcements agencies especially the FBI. They hold you in great esteem as they should & thank God for it.

Almost immediately after Mr. Kennedy was assasinated the news me dia reported that the FBI & the S. S. men in Dallas had not been in close touch with each other during the preperations for the presidents tour. My 20 yr old son who is a student @ Texas A & M came home for the Christmas Holidays & I told him what was being said. He was partially turned away from me when I said this & instantly he faced me & said "The FBI always & at all times knows what its doing. They're some fine men, there's none like them." I noted the expression in his eyes as he said this and I was pleased.

I intend writing to the sponsors of this show too--Spic & Span, Mr. Clean, Black Flag, Camay & Salvo were advertized.

Over I meant to write to you, your birthday or when you finished : so may I now tell you that I thank God that you are in charge il to you & to all those fine people who work with you. You are I feel all would be lost without your vigilance.

NOT RECORDED.

87 JUL 6 1964

Cordially,

JUL 6 1964

b6  
b7C

ALL FUDEN

COPY:crt

111-254084

30

d.e.C/alt/can/mel

6

R30

May 8, 1967

BY LIAISON

REC-107  
62-16765-5

Mrs. Mildred Stegall  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mrs. Stegall:

Reference is made to your request for a name check concerning Gore Vidal.

Mr. Gore Vidal, who was born on October 3, 1925, at West Point, New York, has not been the subject of an investigation by the FBI. Mr. Vidal is described as a writer and author of several books as well as a contributor of articles to various nationally distributed magazines. He was a Democratic-Liberal candidate for the United States Congress in 1960.

Our files reveal that Gore Vidal was mentioned in the January 20, 1948, issue of the "Daily Worker," a former communist newspaper, in connection with a review of his book, "The City And The Pillar." This book dealt with the physical adventures of a male homosexual. Vidal was also an associate of an individual who was the subject of a security-type investigation conducted by the FBI in 1956, based on this individual's reported efforts in attempting to obtain "political asylum in Soviet Russia." This association was determined to be of a business nature.

"The National Guardian," a publication described by the House Committee on Un-American Activities as a "virtual official propaganda arm of Soviet Russia," in its November 13, 1961, issue ~~REC-107~~ ~~published~~ ~~an article stating that Gore Vidal was to be among the speakers for a Wednesday evening December 6, 1961, meeting at Manhattan Center, New York City, which was to be a rally to abolish the House Un-American Activities Committee.~~

- 1 - Mr. DeLoach (sent direct)
- 1 - Mr. Gale (sent direct)
- 1 - Mr. Rosen (sent direct)

NOTE: New York Office telephonically advised on 5-4-67, that their indices contain no additional data concerning Gore Vidal. SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR ADD. DISSEMINATION

Tolson \_\_\_\_\_  
DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_  
Mohr \_\_\_\_\_  
Wick \_\_\_\_\_  
Casper \_\_\_\_\_  
Callahan \_\_\_\_\_  
Conrad \_\_\_\_\_  
Felt \_\_\_\_\_  
Gale \_\_\_\_\_  
Rosen \_\_\_\_\_  
Sullivan \_\_\_\_\_  
Tavel \_\_\_\_\_  
Trickey \_\_\_\_\_  
Tele. \_\_\_\_\_  
Holmes \_\_\_\_\_  
Gandy \_\_\_\_\_  
**DOMAY 10 1967**

MAIL ROOM  TELETYPE UNIT

JCF:ksf (8)

Mrs. Mildred Stegall

In a column prepared by Gore Vidal in the July 17, 1961, issue of the "New York Herald Tribune," he severely criticized the activities of the House Un-American Activities Committee.

In May, 1961, information was received from a confidential source who has furnished reliable information in the past indicating that Gore Vidal, Barrytown, New York, was associated with the pro-Castro Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

(62-107665-4)

In 1963, it was reported that Mr. Vidal was a "friend" of the "Kennedy Clan," in that his stepfather was Mrs. John F. Kennedy's stepfather and that they share a "half-brother and a half-sister." Although Mr. Vidal might have been considered a "friend" of the Kennedys in 1963, recent information coming to our attention tends to indicate that he has developed an antagonistic attitude toward them. In the April 9, 1967, issue of "The Washington Post," Gore Vidal's review of William Manchester's book, "The Death of a President," contains several critical statements concerning the Kennedys. At one point he indicates that there might be some substance to those rumors that the Kennedys are "ruthless and not very lovable after all."

The May 7, 1967, issue of "The Washington Post" makes reference to a recent article appearing in "Esquire" magazine in which Gore Vidal attacks the Kennedy family, particularly Senator Robert Kennedy. Allegedly, one of the bases for this attack concerned a White House party several years ago in which Vidal, who was described as alcoholically exuberant, was requested to leave by Robert Kennedy. Vidal was reported to have stated, "I'm going to destroy you."

Civil fingerprints were located in the files of the FBI Identification Division which may be identical with those of Mr. Vidal. These fingerprints were searched through the criminal files of the Identification Division and no arrest record was located.

A copy of this communication has not been sent to the Attorney General.

Sincerely yours,

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

1 - DeLoach  
1 - Wick  
1 - M.A.Jones

Tolson \_\_\_\_\_  
DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_  
Mohr \_\_\_\_\_  
Wick \_\_\_\_\_  
Casper \_\_\_\_\_  
Callahan \_\_\_\_\_  
Conrad \_\_\_\_\_  
Felt \_\_\_\_\_  
Gale \_\_\_\_\_  
Rosen \_\_\_\_\_  
Sullivan \_\_\_\_\_  
Tavel \_\_\_\_\_  
Trotter \_\_\_\_\_  
Tele. Room \_\_\_\_\_  
Holmes \_\_\_\_\_  
Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

TO : MR. DeLOACH

DATE: May 4, 1967

FROM : STERLING B. DONAHOE

SUBJECT: GORE VIDAL  
WHITE HOUSE NAME CHECK REQUEST

Mrs. Mildred Stegall called from the White House this morning. She advised that we had given them the results of a name check on Vidal in 1964 and she requested that this name check be brought up to date with as much information as possible about Vidal.

Apparently Vidal appeared on the "Today" show this morning and made some vicious remarks. No active investigation is desired but as previously indicated, as much detailed data as is available regarding him should be furnished. If necessary the office covering his place of residence should be contacted to determine whether that office has any additional data and we should be particularly alert to any public statements he has made.

ACTION:

For handling by Crime Records Division.

SBD:hmh  
(4)

Handled by  
outgoing letter  
Mrs. Stegall  
5/8/67  
JCF/ISF

REG-107 62-107665-5

3 MAY 12 1967

CRIMINAL RECORDS  
SEARCHED INDEXED SERIALIZED FILED  
C.R.D.S.

b6  
b7c

Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Records Branch5/7, 1967

Name Searching Unit - Room 6527  
 Service Unit - Room 6524  
 Forward \_\_\_\_\_  
 Attention \_\_\_\_\_ b6  
 Return to 230 b7C  
 Supervisor, Room Ext.

## Type of References Requested:

Regular Request (Analytical Search)  
 All References (Subversive & Nonsubversive)  
 Subversive References Only  
 Nonsubversive References Only  
 Main References Only

## Type of Search Requested:

Restricted to Locality of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Exact Name Only (On the Nose)  
 Buildup  Variations

Gore Vidal

Subject \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate & Place 10/3/25

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Localities \_\_\_\_\_

R# \_\_\_\_\_ Date 5/4 Searcher Initials L.C.M.

Prod. \_\_\_\_\_

FILE NUMBER

SERIAL

X	✓	62-107665	✓
X	✓	62-107665-X1 sum 7/28/61	
X	ND	62-5- 9073	
✓	ND	20347 EP 25	✓
X	SF	105- 92048-15	✓
X	SL	105- 38708-19	✓
X	NP	100- 438794-19	
✓	NP	100- 307889- 4	
X	NP	100- 181329- 58	
X	NP	100- 25688- 114	✓
X	SIV	97- 4196- 34- 38 of 39	
✓	NP	94- 8- 113 A	
		94- 5- 47967	
X	NP	62- 109060-A	
		card add 4/18/67 WASH.	
X	SIV	62- 108885 X1 a	
X	SIV	62- 105957-7	
X	SIV	62- 104401-1384	✓

(over)

## NUMEROUS REFERENCE

## SEARCH SLIP

Subj: Gore, VidalSupervisor  Room <sup>425b6</sup> b7CR# \_\_\_\_\_ Date 3/4 Searcher <sup>425b6</sup> Initial Df

Prod. \_\_\_\_\_

FILE NUMBERSERIALGoreXNP ✓62-46855-257XSF ✓61-7582-A 11/13/61Nat. GuardianXSF ✓61-4478-A D.W. 1/20/48BuildupNRY.XNP ✓105-3809-3 NY ✓MF 81-12-4874 NYCME 3118 ..VME 5104 ..VMF 5336 ..VMF 5754 ..

13000

Dolson

DeLoach

Mohr

Wick

Casper

Callahan

Conrad

Felt

Gale

Roselli

Sullivan

Tavel

Trotter

Tele. Room

Holmes

Gandy

*gpa*

## Wouldn't Serve In War, Vidal Says in CU Talk

Author Gore Vidal told a Catholic University audience last night that if he were of draft age now, he wouldn't go to Vietnam to fight.

"I wouldn't go," he said. "I would not go and I would urge other people not to go."

He said that the idea of "my country right or wrong" is obsolete at a time when a nation's politicians are indeed wrong and at the same time have the power to blast all life off the planet.

Vidal, appearing on WTTG's program "Face to Face," which originated from the CU campus, had little praise for President Johnson.

The author of the new book "Washington, D.C." Vidal said of Johnson: "This poor loon we have now thinks of himself as Abraham Lincoln when he's really a kind of Genghis Kahn."

In Esquire magazine recently, Vidal blasted image-making which he said seeks to make the Kennedys superhuman. Last night he described them as a rather average clan with a lot of money.

Massachusetts politics, he said, is as dirty as any in the nation, but the Kennedys have made no attempt at reform. Instead, Vidal said, they have used the situation as a springboard for their own ambitions.

b6  
b7c62-107665-A-  
The Washington Post

Times Herald

The Washington Daily News

The Evening Star (Washington) *Alo*

The Sunday Star (Washington)

Daily News (New York)

Sunday News (New York)

New York Post

The New York Times

World Journal Tribune

(New York)

The Sun (Baltimore)

The Worker

The New Leader

The Wall Street Journal

The National Observer

People's World

Date MAY 11 1967

57 MAY 18 1967

NOT RECORDED  
176 MAY 17 1967

5/2/68

Airtel

62-10766-5-

(6) To: SAC, New York  
From: Director, FBI (25 NEW)

1 - Mr. DeLoach  
1 - Mr. Bishop  
1 - Mr. Gale  
1 - Mr. Eddy  
1 - Mr. Moore

GENE VIDAL  
NSA - COUNSELING

b6  
b7C

There is enclosed for the New York Office, a true copy of a letter from [redacted] addressed to the Department of Justice. This letter was furnished to the Bureau by memorandum from the Department, 4/23/68, requesting the Bureau make a preliminary investigation to determine what Vidal said on a TV program referred to in [redacted] letter. This program was on WNEW-TV, Channel 5, New York, Saturday, 4/13/68, at 10:30 p.m., entitled "Is Liberalism Dead."

New York conduct investigation to determine the context of Vidal's comments so that they may be reviewed to determine whether there is any possible violation of the Selective Service Act. If no reason known to New York Office which would preclude contact with WNEW-TV, effort should be made to obtain film of program for review. Individuals contacted should be advised the investigation is being conducted at specific request of the Department of Justice.

Submit results of inquiry to the Bureau at the earliest possible date suitable for dissemination including any background information in your files regarding subject.

Enc.

1 - 62-107665

See cover memo Gale to DeLoach, dated 5/1/68, captioned same,  
MM:tmd.

MM:tmd

66 MAY 1 1968

ORIGINAL FILED IN 25 - 572255-1

EX 106

October 23, 1970

REC-73 65-107665-6



Dear [redacted]

Your letter of October 15th has been received and I can understand the concern which prompted you to write and furnish me your views. The FBI is strictly an investigative agency of the Federal Government and, as such, has no control over who appears on television or other mass media.

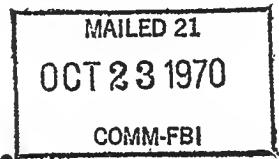
Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

b6  
b7C

NOTE: Correspondent is not identifiable in Bufiles.

REK:jfh (3)

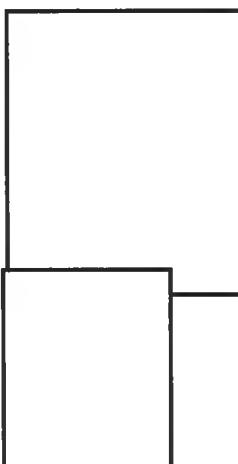


OCT 30 1970

Tolson \_\_\_\_\_  
Sullivan \_\_\_\_\_  
Mohr \_\_\_\_\_  
Bishop \_\_\_\_\_  
Brennan, C.D. \_\_\_\_\_  
Callahan \_\_\_\_\_  
Casper \_\_\_\_\_  
Conrad \_\_\_\_\_  
Felt \_\_\_\_\_  
Gale \_\_\_\_\_  
Rosen \_\_\_\_\_  
Tavel \_\_\_\_\_  
Walters \_\_\_\_\_  
Soyars \_\_\_\_\_  
Tele. Room \_\_\_\_\_  
Holmes \_\_\_\_\_  
Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

NOV 5 1970  
MAIL ROOM

TELETYPE UNIT



UNRECORDED COPY FILED IN 10/23/1970

Oct. 15, 1970

Mr. J. Edgard Hoover  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Washington D.C.

Dear Sir:

I was dismayed over a statement permitted to be broadcast today over NBC national television network during the David Frost Show--a statement by Gore Vidal, a sensationalist writer.

Among Mr. Vidal's seemingly unsolicited remarks, were scornful statements about the vice president of the United States, spilling from his mouth before he even seated himself, and in which he rather obviously tried to solicit a rubber-stamp of his position from Mr. Frost. Mr. Frost, while not disassociating himself with the remarks, fell short of endorsing them.

Yet, Mr. Vidal pursued his opening vituperation with a remarkable statement that in order for us to battle the "system" (political), we could "blow up the capitol AND Mr. Agnew!"

Would you please explain to me, why, in the name of freedom of speech, we allow such dangerous statements to be broadcast over the entire nation?

Advocacy of violence is intolerable, even masquerading as smart-aleck entertainment. It does not go unmarked during these troubled times for our country. We in California have seen some of our government officials indeed "blown up". We certainly don't take kindly to NBC's sponsorship of men of Vidal's ilk.

I am wondering, too, at the rather curious position of Mr. Frost. Is he a citizen of this country in which he finds so much to question? I wonder what Mr. Frost's reaction would be to an American entertainer on BBC, sponsoring, without verbal disassociation, statements that the Prime Minister of England or the Queen should be "blown up"? Or Parliament? Would he bridle or giggle?

ST-105 REG-73

62-107665-0

22 OCT 1970

Sincerely,

UNINDEXED COPY FILED IN

b6  
b7c

ACK 10/23/70  
REK 10/30/70  
OCT 30 1970

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
FOIPA  
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

**Serial Description ~ Unrecorded Serial**

Total Deleted Page(s) ~ 2

Page 35 ~ Referral/Direct

Page 36 ~ Referral/Direct

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X Deleted Page(s) X  
X No Duplication Fee X  
X for this Page X  
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